

Compare roles in health

Not sure where to start with the hundreds of NHS careers? Use our compare roles section to get bite-size information on the entry requirements and training, pay and conditions, prospects and skills needed of up to three roles. If there is something that you think you could do, then get more in-depth information on the role.

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General surgery [1]

General surgeons perform a wide range of surgery, often in emergency situations, and make up 25% of all consultant surgeons.

Training and qualifications required

You'll need to follow a set pattern of training which usually starts with a five year first degree in medicine and two years of foundation training. You will then undertake two years of core training (CT1–2), followed by 5 years of specialist training (ST3–7). This period of training will include completing your royal college exams. The length of training can vary according to your circumstances.

Expected working hours and salary range

Working hours should not exceed 48 hours a week. The working hours may sometimes extend beyond the normal working day to include early mornings, evenings and weekends. You will also need to be on call. The basic salary ranges from £29,384 to £34,012. Once you start your specialty training as a general surgeon employed by the NHS, you can expect to earn a salary of at least £40,257, which can increase to between £84,559 and £114,003 as a consultant.

Desirable skills and values

You'll need excellent communication skills and be emotionally resilient, have a calm temperament and the ability to work well under pressure. You'll have the capacity to lead multidisciplinary teams and have excellent problem-solving and diagnostic skills. As a x surgeon, you'll have: a high degree of manual dexterity; superb hand-eye co-ordination; excellent vision; visuospatial awareness and the physical stamina to cope with the demands of surgery.

Prospects

There are approximately 2,571 general surgeons working in the NHS in England. You could specialise within general surgery, for example breast surgery, lower gastrointestinal surgery, endocrine surgery, upper gastrointestinal surgery, transplant surgery or advanced trauma surgery.

Related roles

- Anaesthesia [2]
- Emergency medicine [3]
- Medical oncology [4]
- Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [5]

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